

168 Little Beaver Creek Road
Trout Creek, MT 59874
January 20, 2009

Chairman Barkus and members of the Fish & Game Committee:

As a resident of western Sanders County, I, Bill Meadows, Trout Creek, support **SB202**. The last few years an urban population has moved into the rural area where I live. One of the first things they do is to feed the deer and elk during winter and spring. Because of this, the ungulate patterns are changing. For example, more elk are calving in the neighborhood and have become a year-around herd. This causes damage to farmers' crops and fences in the area. I'm concerned that the wolf population will be attracted to the congregating herds.

In the Heron area, a couple owns a bed and breakfast. During the fall, they feed the elk so their guests can watch them. After the guests leave, they quit feeding the elk. The elk then move onto an adjoining ranch where they destroy his hay stacks.

I recommend adding "agricultural damage" to (2)(c) because without considering it, County Attorneys may not prosecute.

Another option is to delete (2)(c). Then, there is no question.

Thank you for your consideration on this bill.

Respectfully,

Bill Meadows